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# Senior Executive Intelligence Brief



**Thursday, 1 June 2000**

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## *Regional Notes*

### **EAST ASIA**

#### **North Korea:**

#### **Solidifying Chinese Ties Ahead of Inter-Korean Summit**

*North Korean leader Kim Chong-il's brief visit to Beijing this week reminds Seoul on the eve of the historic summit that he has other benefactors*

*Kim Chong-il's penchant for unpredictability and his heightened diplomatic profile may portend additional surprises. Kim's decision to defer National People's Congress Chairman Li Peng's visit to P'yongyang in favor of a personal visit to Beijing suggests his agenda may be broader than increased aid and improved ties.*

*— Kim may have sought Chinese support if he is planning to present a major new initiative at the Korean summit this month, such as military confidence-building measures or North-South peace talks.*

*Regardless of whether aid is the primary focus of Kim's trip, he will expect the Chinese to reward the visit with increased aid flows. After years of having its invitations to visit rebuffed, Beijing is likely to oblige.*

*P'yongyang's surprise moves this year, including Kim's visit to the Chinese Embassy in March and the North-South summit agreement, indicate the North may have a new game plan designed to broaden sources of economic assistance and to neutralize US pressure on WMD issues.*